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DD/S-2144

26 MAY 1970

MEMORANDUM FOR: Deputy Director for Support

SUBJECT : Management of Records and Information Processing Activities

1. Paragraph 13 contains a recommendation for your approval.
2. We have problems in the Support Services Staff which are impeding our ability to fulfill our responsibilities and plan adequately for their future fulfillment.

a. We have a mix of responsibilities at the Agency and Directorate levels: the Regulations Control Branch has an Agency role; the Records Administration Branch has an Agency role and a Directorate role; the Information Processing Branch has a Directorate role; we have the Agency responsibility for Emergency Planning and the responsibility for the Directorate Historical Board. In addition the Executive Director has recently expressed agreement with the idea that there should be an Agency Archives but has said it should be a Support function. We have the responsibilities without the resources to meet them.

b. The Support Directorate has no records staff but has relied on the Agency Staff for support. The Agency Staff has fewer people than the Clandestine Services Records Management Officer has to deal with CS records problems; not enough to meet its Agency responsibilities much less to meet the additional requirements of the Support Directorate. The Support Directorate has a larger volume of records than the Clandestine Service.

c. Not only are we short on quantity, we do not have the quality of resources necessary to do what we can see needs to be done. Some offices, for example, have included in their Program submissions plans to develop new systems. The Chief, Plans Staff has asked the Support Services Staff to concur in these plans. Before concurring we should understand the problems in order to be able to make

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reasonable judgments about whether the proposals represent the best or the right solutions. We do not have anyone who can be spared from his present duties for the time it would take to conduct such studies. In any event, none of our people has the qualifications to do an adequate job of recommending the best solution because none of them has the appropriate combination of experience and background in manual, automated, and microfilm systems. To get the right combination we would have to use more than one person and it is twice as hard to release two as one.

d. Staffing constraints in the Records Administration Branch through the years have deprived us of the flexibility necessary to keep people current with the state of the art and broaden their experience. The youngest member of RAB is 42 and she has been in her present assignment 14 years. The oldest member is 53 and he has been in his present assignment 19 years. The lack of staffing flexibility prevents the assignment of young officers and we have no practical way of making room for them because the experienced records officers are too highly specialized for assignment to other types of positions. Attitudes toward records management and the career service structure itself are such that young officers are not likely to be attracted to the records profession.

e. All of the problems of the records program which have been cited in various presentations over the past two or three years continue to exist because resources are not available to do anything about them. To restate all of these problems in detail here would be needlessly redundant, but it should be re-emphasized that systematic management control over the creation of record material is the heart of any successful records management program. Records management programs must give attention to all methods and media of records creation: correspondence, microforms, reports including the output of computer systems, file creation and storage, forms design, and copying machines.

f. Some of the same and some different problems plague the Information Processing Branch. People were selected by their parent career services for assignment to this function with the result that we have more quantity than quality of the kind we need for the long term. In the Information Processing function, we have the problem of uncertainty or open endedness concerning the future of the SIPS Task Force. Planning to meet the long term information processing requirements without knowing the future of the SIPS Task Force will be awkward. It would be helpful to know whether we will

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continue to operate under an agreement with DDS&T, return to separate management of DDS and OCS resources, or place the total responsibility in one Directorate or the other, and we will need to be highly selective in identifying the people who will perform the functions in whatever organizational setting is chosen.

g. We need to consider whether to concentrate the information processing skills in one place or allow them to develop in each of the offices. Having these skills in both places leads to competition between the two, and the central structure tends to find itself in an adversary role opposite the people having these skills in the offices. Moreover, competence in the information processing field is so scarce that competition for it within the Directorate cannot be afforded.

h. Management of the information processing personnel in the Support Directorate is a problem that we cannot deal with effectively until we have settled on the future of the SIPS Task Force and how we should organize to cope with information processing problems of the future. We need to be able to plan for the kinds of skills we are going to require and in what mix and then we need to figure out what career paths and opportunities can be offered.

i. There is a need in the Support Directorate for a staff competence to take the initiative in identifying and dealing with problems. There is a need to bring some imaginativeness into the records and information processing functions in a Directorate context as well as within the individual offices. There should be a close procedural and review relationship with the DDS Plans Staff to ensure that programs developed in the offices give proper attention to Directorate implications. We should be able to aggressively and imaginatively pursue the development of information systems to meet changing Directorate requirements. The DDS should have a staff he can turn to with problems whether they are local to one office or are Directorate-wide. Problems identified for the Problem Solving Seminars which do not lend themselves to solutions in a week may be examples as well as some of the studies and actions needed to take advantage of the recommendations of the Seminars. There should be a nucleus of competence in the modern management sciences to ensure that we develop solutions and foster innovations which are at least current with the present state of the art.

j. The idea of the Data Management Center being developed

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by the SIPS Task Force suggests the need for a new concept in systems management, or at least an adaptation of traditional line-staff relationships. The data managed in these centers will be the products of integrated systems designs which will not fit neatly within the functional responsibilities of one Support Office or another. The centers will have to be managed in some way at a level which falls between the Office and Directorate levels without directly superimposing another management echelon between the Deputy Director for Support and his Office Directors.

k. We need a capability to review and evaluate on-going systems to find out whether they are doing what they were intended to do or have outlived their usefulness and to take corrective action as appropriate. This need applies to all information processing systems, manual, automated, filmed, or whatever.

3. The most difficult problem of all, of course, is to find some way to deal with the problems stated above. They exist because there are functions to be performed that are not being performed at the Agency, Directorate, or component levels; because the resources available are fully committed to their present tasks and none are available to deal with new problems; because the resources available have evolved into organizational structures to meet particular requirements as they occurred and this has caused distortions in the career service and personnel management systems; and because the evolution of functions has caused a peculiar admixture of Agency and Directorate responsibilities at different echelons of the organization. Perhaps the best way to get at the solution to these problems is to examine the functions which lie behind them.

4. Basically these functions relate to the continuing requirement for management improvement. Management improvement almost inevitably will cause, or must be accomplished through, changing current or developing new information processing systems. The process of change begins with problem identification and proceeds through the steps of defining the problem, conceptualizing alternative solutions, designing a change to the present system or developing a new one, and implementing the solution chosen.

An example may be useful to describe the process:

In a recent program submission, the Office of Medical Services said its file room in the headquarters building was nearing capacity. Although the problem was initially identified as a space problem, it is directly related to OMS's overall records filing and information processing systems. To solve the problem, OMS proposed to install a terminal digit system and a microfiche system and to engage the services of a consultant. The need for a consultant is

not clear, especially since two solutions have already been selected. Because microfilming is not usually an economical solution to a space problem, we recommended further consideration and study before proceeding. Using the steps listed in paragraph four above, the process would be as follows:

a. Problem identification - the file room is nearing its capacity and the overcrowded condition results in inefficiencies in the filing and retrieval of individual clinical files.

b. Definition of the problem would require an examination of the system to develop answers to such questions as: What is the content of the file? Where, why, and by whom is it originated? How long is it kept and why? How often is the file retrieved? Is the whole file needed each time it is retrieved or only certain documents it contains? What is the frequency of update? What is the output from the file?

c. Study and analysis of the answers to these and other questions should permit definition of the real problem and permit alternative solutions to be conceptualized. The alternatives may range from some form of manual solution to miniaturization to automation or a combination of two or three of these choices. Selection of the best alternative will depend on feasibility, cost, and expected benefits.

5. The example of the Medical files problem points directly to the very close relationship between records management functions and information processing functions. A file problem is an information processing problem. The solution may or may not require the use of computers or microform. There are other problems and functions which point up the close relationship between the records and information processing functions.

a. The need to change a form or design a new one usually is symptomatic of a problem in an information processing system. Before a form is changed the designer ought to have a pretty thorough knowledge of the system the form is to serve. A form is a medium for collecting data and dispersing it. Data on the form should be ordered in such a way that it facilitates the collection and entry of information required as well as its extraction from the form by its users. Forms may be either input to manual, automated, or filmed systems or output from them, or they may simply be a convenient medium for hard copy storage of some systematic array of data. The purposes for which they are to be used and roles they play in the infor-

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mation processing systems they serve are critical factors in determining how they should be designed. Records Management officers have traditionally had primary responsibility for forms management and design. In today's world of Optical Scanning Forms and Computer Output Microform, the storage, manipulation, and retrieval of information demands that information systems analysts play a co-equal role in forms management.

b. Reports management is a primary element of every Records Management Program. Reports are the products - the outputs - of virtually every information processing system, manual or automated. Outputs are produced to satisfy information requirements. Their content, format, frequency and distribution are critical elements of information processing systems design. Reports are records for short term use or long term preservation.

c. The files and outputs of all systems are record material regardless of the form they take. When their immediate utility to every day operations in the office declines they will be transferred to the Records Center. Those which have historical value will be retained permanently in the Archives where they will become the research tools of the history of the Agency.

6. The relationships among the historical, archival, and records management functions seem self evident and should not require further elaboration. The relationship between the information processing and records management functions is illustrated and described in the foregoing paragraphs. Neither the Agency nor the several Directorates are currently organized to deal with these functions in a coherent fashion. The Agency Historical Staff is a separate unit reporting to the Executive Director-Comptroller; the Agency Information Processing Staff reports to the Director of Planning, Programming and Budgeting; and the Agency Records Administration Staff is a Branch of the Support Services Staff in the Support Directorate. Functional coherence suggests that they should all be a part of the same organizational component reporting to the Executive Director-Comptroller with each function represented as a separate Division within that component. Transferring the Agency Records Management function to the Office of the Executive Director would be the most logical, simplest, least disruptive, and least controversial change.

7. The recent response of the Executive Director to our Archives proposal suggests that he would not be receptive to having these functions report to him.* That being the case another alternative is to consider

*This might work if [REDACTED] was made the Chief of a new staff composed of Archives, Historical, Records, and IP Divisions and someone else became Deputy to the Director OPB.

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transferring the Historical Staff and Information Processing Staff (PPB) to the Support Directorate for incorporation into one component with the Agency Records Administration and Archives functions. The Chairman of the IP Board could still be located in OPPB and report to the Executive Director. Such an organizational arrangement would be awkward, but not as awkward as the present arrangement where some of these functions report to the Executive Director and others report to the DDS. Transferring the Historical and Information Processing functions from the Office of the Executive Director to the Support Directorate is likely to be highly controversial and, I suspect, unacceptable to the other Directorates, the Historical Staff, the Information Processing Staff OPPB and the Executive Director. The alternative most likely to be acceptable, therefore, is to defer basic organizational changes impacting outside the DDS. The Historical Staff and the IPS (PPB) can be left where they are and we can concentrate on organizational changes within the DDS to achieve the functional coherence suggested in paragraph seven above. In short, we should put the DDS organizational house in order before attempting to sell these concepts in other Directorates or in the Agency at large.

8. If we make no organizational transfers between the Support Directorate and the Office of the Director, it means, of course, that the Records Administration Branch will remain in the Support Directorate and be expected to fill the Agency Records Management role. In the past it has also been expected to fill the Records Management role for the Support Directorate. At best, this is an untidy arrangement. At worst, it is an unworkable one. Because Agency interest in Records Management has been virtually dormant for so many years, actual experience has fallen somewhere between the best and worst extremes. Unless additional resources are made available it would be folly to expect that we will be able to do much about changing the conditions of the past. Additional resources are needed for the Agency program to get the Records Branch out of the present hand holding and semiprofessional chores which keep them fully occupied now. To put the Support Directorate house in order we need to have an adequately staffed Records Management function separate from the Agency function; we need to establish the relationship between the Information Processing and the records management functions within the Support Directorate; we need to provide for the management of SIPS Data Management Centers; we need to provide the capability to fulfill the interdependent role between the offices and the DDS; we need to provide for the capability to take initiatives and meet the other needs described in paragraph 2; and we need to know how we plan to proceed after the SIPS Task Force has served its purpose. (Separate papers are being prepared to justify the numbers and kinds of people that will be required.)

9. Recent discussions with the Acting Director of the Office of Computer Services reveal that he considers OCS should be primarily "a computer shop." He defines "computer shop" as including program design and computer operation. The Information Processing Branch of

the Support Services Staff, as a customer, would be responsible for "application system design" and would look upon the computer as a "black box." This is essentially the concept we had when we started the SIPS project but we did not have the experience necessary to carry it all the way through "application system design" to a point where we could turn over to OCS a "package" from which they could proceed with program design. The talent to fill this gap was in the Office of Computer Services but could not be relieved to work full time on SIPS because they were pre-occupied with present systems and responding to current requirements. The SIPS Task Force was formed to bring all of the resources under single management within the Support Directorate and to permit the adjudication of priorities and the allocation of resources to meet current as well as SIPS requirements. The Acting Director of OCS suggests that the gap could be filled in the future by "seeding" the Support Services Staff with the right kind of talent from OCS either by regular assignment or by detail. This seems to say that when the Task Force has fulfilled its basic mission the Management Support Division of OCS would return to OCS and the Support personnel assigned to the Task Force would return to the Support Services Staff as the Information Processing Branch.

10. I believe that experience of the SIPS Task Force will support the thesis that the Support Directorate could manage its ADP systems more effectively if all of the necessary personnel and hardware resources were under DDS management. Failing that, we can almost certainly justify having all of the assets except the hardware under DDS management, which is to say the SIPS Task Force as presently constituted. The least desirable alternative is that proposed by the Acting Director of OCS which might be workable but only with difficulty, if our experience to date is a valid indicator. Arguments can be developed to support any of the following positions:

- a. DDS should have all of the assets, including the hardware, necessary to meet directorate information processing requirements.
- b. DDS should have all of the necessary assets except the hardware.
- c. DDS should have only the assets necessary to analyze and define problems and perform "application" system design, and OCS should have the assets to perform program design, programming and hardware operation.

While our experience with SIPS tends to support (a) and will support (b) more convincingly, it is doubtful that argumentation to support either option could be presented so effectively that DDSST, OCS, or the Executive Director would be persuaded that responsibility for these functions should be transferred to the Support Directorate. This is an issue which does not have to be resolved immediately. It

can wait until we have gained more experience and perhaps that experience will show without a great deal of supporting theoretical argument which alternative should be adopted for the long term. In any case, the alternatives represent a reasonable division of the total information processing function and present the logical pattern to follow even if alternative (a) were adopted. If all of the assets were brought into the Support Directorate, it would be reasonable to have an operations unit composed of the hardware and the personnel to operate it; a program unit to do program design and programming; and a problem definition and applications design unit. On the other hand, it seems reasonable to assume that only the problem definition and applications design function, our part of the SIPS Task Force, will become a permanent part of the Support Directorate. In any case, we will want to be as selective as we possibly can in identifying the people and getting the right mix of talent.

11. Accepting our part of the SIPS Task Force as a reasonable point of departure and adding to it the Support Directorate records management function, we can provide the nucleus around which can be built the capability to take initiatives in identifying problems and developing solutions; operating and maintaining the SIPS systems and providing supervision and management of SIPS Data Management Centers; reviewing and evaluating ongoing systems; planning imaginatively and aggressively and following up to evaluate progress; developing Management Information Systems to meet changing requirements; furnishing DDS with a competence he can turn to with problems whether they are local or Directorate wide; and providing the competence in modern management sciences to ensure that solutions are current with the existing state of the art. Whether all of these functions would fit within the traditional concept of a staff relationship to the DDS or would assume the complexion of an operating Support Office is a moot question. Clearly elements of both are present. Some mixture of responsibilities is inevitable and unavoidable because more and more we are dealing with systems which transgress the functional responsibilities of different offices and we must have the capability not only to operate and maintain them, but to modernize and change them. We must have the capability to review and coordinate new management improvement and program proposals to determine not only their validity and value, but their total implications in a system context. (For example, microform systems in the Office of Medical Services may have implications in the Offices of Security and Personnel as well as SIPS Human Resources systems.) Having determined the implications, we need the capability to define the system problem and design and implement a solution. If the solution cuts across functional office lines and results in an integrated system, we will have to operate and maintain it or provide a structure to do that. Problem identification and definition, system design, implementation, operation, and maintenance are part of a continuum and their performance must be provided for in one organizational structure. This structure must be responsive to the needs of Office as well as Directorate level management. It must offer a

consultative service to the offices and a staff review service to the DDS. Consultation must not only be required to satisfy Directorate level management but sought after to assist Office level management. Involvement must begin at the very earliest time that plans are conceived or problems identified to ensure that appropriate management judgment is brought to bear before problems become solutions, unavailable resources become committed, and the least consequential preempt the essential. Tab A illustrates the concept schematically.

12. In summary, we have said

a. records management, archives, history, and information processing are functionally related and should be put together at the Agency level, and that there should be similar structures at the Directorate level;

b. the Agency responsibility for these functions should be placed in a component reporting to the Executive Director;

c. this proposal is probably unacceptable, and if it is, they should be placed together in the Support Directorate;

d. transfer of the Historical Staff and IP Staff/OPPB to DDS is even more controversial and less likely to be accepted;

e. the SIPS Task Force should be a permanent part of the Support Directorate, but this would not be acceptable to DDS&T or OCS;

f. we should not push for a confrontation on these issues now but leave the Historical Staff and IP Staff OPPB where they are; accept the responsibility for problem definition and application system design, the role the Information Processing Branch of the Support Services Staff has been playing in the SIPS Task Force; and concentrate on putting the DDS house in order;

g. putting the DDS house in order involves augmenting the Agency Records function and creating a separate Support Directorate Records Management function, combining the latter with the Information Processing function in one organizational component;

h. the Information Processing Branch and a newly created Support Directorate records function should be the nucleus of a new organizational component responsible for long and short term planning; applying techniques of scientific management; identifying management problems and developing solutions; operating and maintaining SIPS systems; providing supervision

and management of SIPS Data Management Centers; reviewing and evaluating on-going systems; developing new information systems to meet changing requirements; and providing staff assistance to the DDS and consultative service to the offices;

i. the Agency responsibilities for Records, Archives, Regulations, and Emergency planning would be left in the Support Services Staff.

13. The following is recommended:

a. The DDS explore with the Executive Director-Comptroller the acceptability of combining the Historical Staff, Information Processing Staff/OPPB, the Records Administration Branch/SSS and the proposed Agency Archives Unit into one component reporting to the Executive Director-Comptroller. If the response is negative, explore the acceptability of transferring the Historical Staff and the Information Processing Staff/OPPB to the Support Services Staff.

b. The Agency Records Management Staff (SSS/RAB), regardless of its ultimate organizational location, be augmented by two professional positions at the earliest possible date. (This does not include positions necessary to staff an Agency Archives function if and when this responsibility is assigned to the DDS.)


c. A Support Directorate records management staff (8 positions) be established as soon as possible and combined with the Information Processing Branch of Support Services Staff (These 8 positions and the two for augmenting the Agency Records Staff are described and justified in a separate memorandum).

d. You approve the concept of a Support Information Management Center as described in earlier paragraphs and shown schematically in Tab A, to be built around the nucleus of the Information Processing Branch and the newly created Support Records function. (In addition to positions required for the Support records function, we foresee an ultimate requirement to augment the FY 72 programmed level of 26 positions for the Information Processing portion of this new unit by up to six positions as we assume the new functions described in paragraph 12h. As positions become available through the return of Support Careerists from the Task Force to their parent career services, or through the creation of new positions, we would begin to fill them with special skills through a highly selective screening process from external as well as internal sources. We would undertake to perform the functions, of course, only as the resources become available. I would see this as a gradual process phased over the next two or three years to reach the level of competence we need and should have. Details supporting

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these estimates will be included in a separate paper. The Archives function is not included and will be dealt with in its own right.)

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Chief, Support Services Staff

The recommendations contained in paragraph 13 are approved.

R. L. BANNERMAN
Deputy Director
for Support

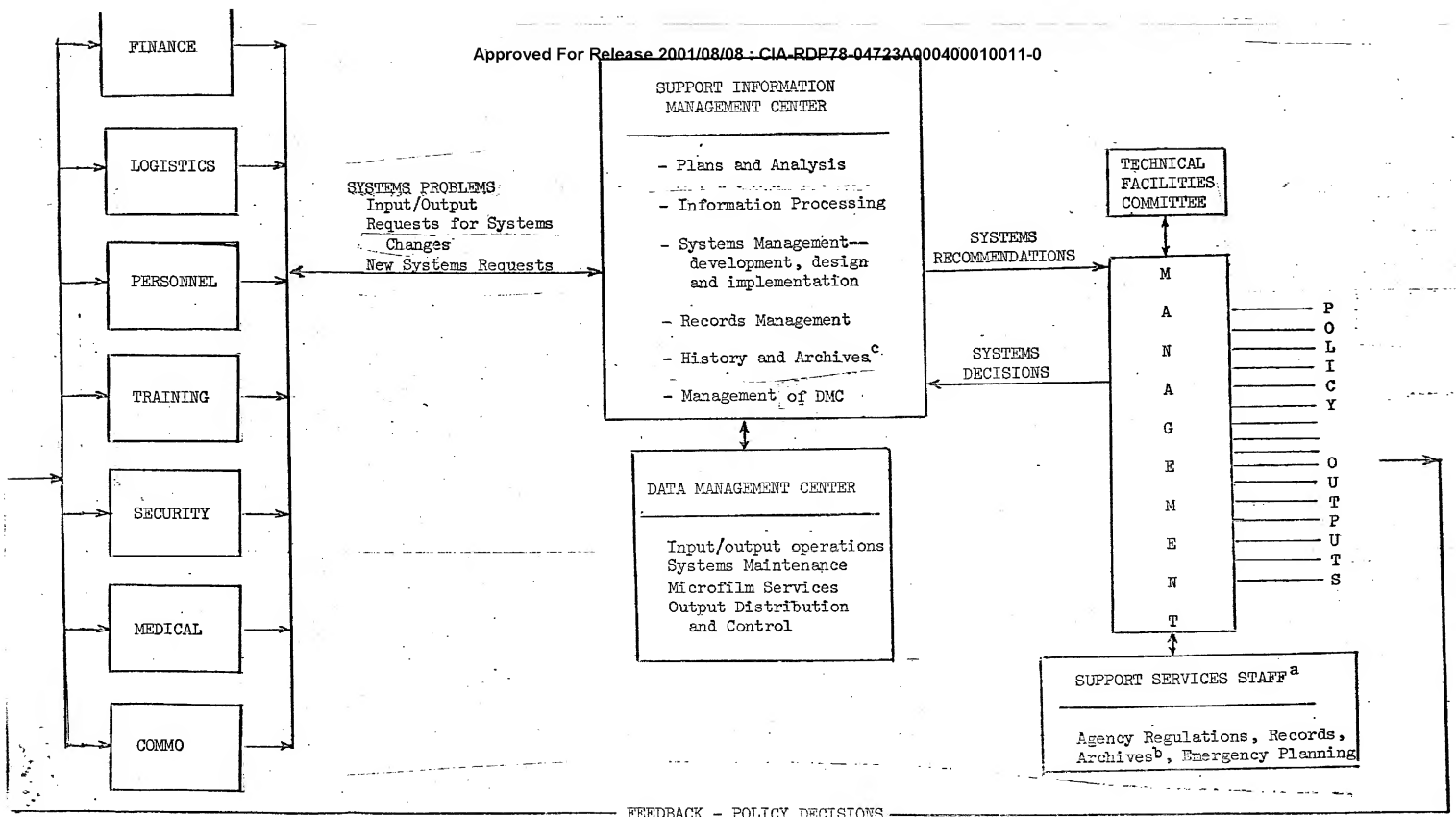
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^a This Staff is dependent upon whether the Directorate retains responsibility for Agency functions.

^b Agency archives function still in conceptual stage.

^c Directorate archives function dependent upon ^a above.